



Crewing for a Hot Air Balloon

Thank you for helping us during the Tallahassee Balloon Festival. Your participation is critical for safe and successful tether operations!

Schedule

Friday 3/20 and Saturday 3/21 – arrive at 3:00 p.m. for pilot assignment and briefing. Tether hours are 4:00 to 10:00. Please exchange phone numbers with the volunteer coordinator and your pilot so we can communicate about weather or assignment changes.

What to Expect

During tether operations, the balloon basket will go up and down many times. You may be assigned to assist with balloon inflation and helping passengers with entering and leaving the basket.

If you have physical limitations, let us know. There are other activities that do not require lifting.

Most Important Things to Know

1. ALWAYS take directions from your pilot and crew chief. Ask for permission or instructions before you act.
2. Wear gloves (leather preferred).
3. Release the basket if your toes or feet are in danger.
4. Never let the balloon or ropes lift you off the ground. Let go!
5. Keep yourself and passengers away from the fan.
6. Guide passengers around ropes, not under them.
7. No smoking – crew, passengers and crowd.
8. Drink plenty of water.
9. Use the facilities before inflation.

What to Wear

- Boots or sneakers with socks. No sandals or flip flops.
- Bring gloves.
- Avoid loose clothing and jewelry that might get catch in the fabric
- Ball cap or hat, sunglasses, small flashlight (optional but recommended)

Weather

Hot air balloon tethers require predictable wind speed and direction. When rain or thunderstorms are in the area, hot air balloons do not inflate. Give your pilot your contact phone number so we can let you know if tether operations are cancelled due to weather.

What to Expect When the Balloon Is Tethered

- **Your job.** Your crew chief will assign you to specific tasks. Ask for instruction or permission before actions.
- **Always be aware of your surroundings.** Instruct passengers and spectators to avoid the ropes. Look for potential situations that may need attention and alert the crew chief or pilot if you become aware of tangled ropes or weather changes.
- **Take care of the envelope.** Use load tapes to move the fabric. Do not step on the fabric.
- **Help guide passengers into and out of the basket.** The pilot will instruct passengers when to load and unload. Remind passengers to wait for instructions.
- **'Hands on - Weight on', 'Hand on – Weight off' and 'Hands off - Weight off'.** Instructions the pilot will give you to stabilize the balloon.
- **If the balloon become uncontrollable, NEVER TRY TO STOP THE PROCESS.** Let go and step away if you are in danger.

